Central schemes by the Banks operating in State of Uttaranchal during the last two years;

(b) whether the targets fixed in this regard have been achieved by these banks; and

(c) if not, the steps being taken by the Ministry to get the target achieved by these banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the House.

Exemption of Hindu Temples from Income Tax

3468. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government has received any proposal from the State Government Karnataka to amend Section 10(23BRA) of the Income Tax to exempt Hindu temples from Income Tax;

(b) if so, the status of the same; and

(c) the reasons for the long pendency of the said proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) A proposal from the State Government of Karnataka to amend section 10(23BBA) of the Income-tax so as to exempt Hindu temples falling under the purview of the Karnataka Hindu Religious Institutions and Charitable Endowments Act, 1997 has been received. The same is under consideration.

(c) The proposal to amend section 10(23BBA) involves examination of several factual and legal issues. A report was called for from field formation which is being examined.

Privatisation of Public Sector Banks

3469. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received suggestion for privatization of Public Sector Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Loans to SCs/STs/OBCs by Banks

3470. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps taken by Government to simplify its policy for providing loans to SCs, STs, OBCs, small and marginal farmers, labourers and poor educated/uneducated unemployed youths through the Banks in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the number of applications received and sanctioned for granting loan by nationalised banks under various self-employment schemes during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) As reported by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) the steps taken to simplify its policy for providing loans to SC/STs, OBCs, small and marginal farmers and unemployed graduates inter-ailia include:

1. **Relaxation for SC/ST beneficiaries under major Centrally Sponsored Schemes**

(i) Under SGSY Scheme, beneficiaries belonging to SC/ST are entitled to subsidy of 50% of the project cost with a maximum ceiling of Rs. 10,000/-.

(ii) 10 year relaxation in the upper age limit under PMRY Scheme.

(iii) Under the DRI scheme the eligibility criteria for size of land holding not exceeding one acre of irrigated land and 2.5 acres of unirrigated land is not applicable to SCs/STs.

2. **Guidelines for simplifying policy for loans to SCs/STs**

(i) Bank staff to assist in completion of procedural formalities.

(ii) Bank staff to contact SC/ST borrowers to explain the salient features of the schemes for availing credit facilities.